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give a name even to those which they say are of no use to them. Unfortunately, in many cases I was unable to identify the plants of which the native names were given to me.[1] Sometimes the same term will be used for a number of plants of similar habits of growth, e.g. *wanis*, fairly translatable by our generic word 'grass', and *kurits*, used for a hanging vine or creeper, often as a prefix attached to another word. There is a generic word for 'tree'—*no'on*, which also means wood, especially firewood (*kuip no'on*, to cut firewood, one of the women's daily tasks).

Some of the trees appear not to be indigenous. Mrs. Hadden told me that her father, Mr. Parkinson, the anthropologist, who was the first white man to live in this region (about forty years ago), introduced some of the citrus fruits and other useful trees, which have since spread rapidly throughout the area.

The natives cultivate coco-nut palms, areca palms, and bananas, as well as taro (*Colocasia esculenta*) and other vegetables (some account of their food plants is given in Chapter VIII). Bread-fruit trees and canarium almonds are highly prized, the position of each one is known, and they are always spared when fresh ground is cleared for a new taro garden. Some of the trees which go to make up the uncut bush yield a hard timber which is found useful by the resident whites for building and for piles, especially such as withstand the ravages of salt water. But the difficulty of transportation renders these of no commercial value. The natives use them for house-posts and other purposes, but prefer the soft-timbered trees for their canoes. The most striking objects in the bush are huge trees with enormous flanges buttressing their trunks, and the aerial roots of the banyans, which serve the natives as ridge poles for their huts. Several different kinds of palm and of bamboo are used for a variety of purposes. A big carophyllum tree is a frequent landmark on the lee shore, affording welcome shade under which the men sit mending their nets and the women making hoods or baskets or playing with their babies. A large fallen trunk on the beach at Petats was a favourite gathering-place for all. Parts of the shore are covered with mangrove swamps, which make landing impossible.

Of smaller growth, there are several kinds of croton and hibiscus,

[1] For the identification of some of them I am indebted to the authorities of Kew Gardens. A list of these will be found in Appendix III. Others I have recognized from the description given by Guppy.

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many other shrubs, a large variety of ferns and mosses, and innumerable fungi, some of which are eaten. Creepers and epiphytes of all kinds abound, but there are fewer orchids than are reported from other islands: a small white variety is the most common. The abundance of rattan and other thorny plants makes progress through uncut bush a slow and sometimes painful business, and as a path that is little used very soon becomes overgrown, no one ever goes any distance into the bush without a knife.

The bush is disappointing in its lack of colour. It is all too green. Not only are the flowers few and far between—partly owing to the fact that a native will never pass a flowering shrub without taking his toll of its blossoms to put in his hair—but the birds and the butterflies also are less brilliant than I had expected. There are some bright red and blue parrots, and the cockatoos, dazzlingly white in the sunshine, are conspicuous amid the foliage, but otherwise the birds are not striking, except the hornbill, with his extraordinary yellow beak and the whirr of his wings, which is one of the most characteristic sounds of the forest. There are several varieties of pigeon, called in imitation of its plaintive note, *kūrō*, and numbers of small birds, of which the most noticeable is a species of wagtail. Butterflies, though very large, are mostly black or brown, flecked or striped with white, but there is also a very beautiful black one with small iridescent bluish-green patches on its smaller wings.

The bush abounds with life, but nearly all the creatures are of small size. The largest animal is the wild pig, which if you meet it is usually far more frightened than ferocious, unless it is wounded, or has young. The cuscus opossum, or phalanger, which lives in the holes of hollow trees, attains to about the size of a large cat. Flying foxes in great numbers keep up their short sharp bark nearly all night, and what with them and the frogs, and some insect of the grasshopper tribe (called by the natives *nen-nen*, because its note sounds like these syllables repeated in a high-pitched voice), the bush is never silent except perhaps for an hour or so before dawn. Iguanas and all kinds of small lizards are plentiful, and there are also snakes, whether poisonous or not I cannot say. The natives are afraid of them, and kill them on sight, if possible, by beating them with a stick. The large coco-nut-eating land-crab (from Guppy's description I take this to be *Birgus latro*) is an odd sight. These natives do not eat it, as do others elsewhere,

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poses—in a dozen or so cleaned-out coco-nut shells. The men come in from the reef, dangling strings of fish, if they have been lucky, or from the bush with a 'possum or two on a pole over their shoulders. Smoke begins to rise from every hut, in preparation for the main meal of the day. This consists for the most part of taro, but it is essential to have a 'relish' of fish, shell-fish, or 'possum, or, in the rare event of a hunter having been successful, a piece of wild pig, if the animal is not required to be kept alive for a forthcoming feast. But either the pigs are very wary, or, which is more likely, the hunter has given less attention to his quarry than to his assignation, for it is not often that he brings home any spoil.

The meal disposed of, the sound of the conch-shell calls the village to evening service. By the time it is over, the sun will have set. There is no twilight in these latitudes, darkness falling a very short time after the sun has disappeared. Fires provide the only illumination, and soon appear dotted about the village, with groups sitting round them chatting and playing with the children. In spite of what may have seemed an uneventful day, they always have plenty to talk about, and they sometimes tease one another unmercifully. If a dance is going on, any one who wishes joins in, and, if the occasion is a ceremonial one, and is sufficiently important, every one, children as well as adults, stays up all night, some always keeping the dance going while others stop to rest, to eat, or to make love, returning to the ranks of the dancers as and when they feel inclined.

If nothing is toward, the village settles down for the night very early, unless there is a moon, when it will resound with gossip and laughter for a long time. It is considered silly to go to bed while the moon shines. Once when I excused myself for leaving the assembled company on the ground that I was sleepy, they laughed, and said: 'This is not the time to go to bed. By and by, when the moon is gone, then you can sleep.'

Thus runs the course of an ordinary day in the life of a Bougainville village. In order to ascertain how the natives spent their time, individually, I kept for a while a daily record of certain of those who lived nearest to me, not, of course, in great detail, but noting what they were doing for the major part of each day. The records vary, naturally, with the character of the individual. Some are much more public-spirited than others, and take a prominent part in most village activities, other arrange their days to suit their own

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presence of this idea. My attention was first drawn to it by watching a man castrate a young European pig he had just purchased from a trader. Knowing that European pigs are greatly prized, I asked him why he did not leave the pig alone so that he could mate it with his sow. (Pigs of mixed origin are counted as European pigs.) His reply was that what he was doing would not interfere with that at all, he would get European pigs from his sow just the same, because he only cut away the testicles (*orn*) and not the penis (*utsin*). To emphasize his point he reminded me that all the young males among the village pigs were castrated, but that the sows continued to produce young. There are plenty of wild pigs in the bush who have free access to the domestic sows, but this explanation was not accepted when I offered it.[1] The belief in the sufficiency of penetration was then stated, and further conversation elicited the fact that it was considered to apply also in the case of human beings.

Given this idea, it is not such a very far cry to the further belief that conception can take place without the co-operation of the male, and there is no doubt that this also is held. The legend, widespread over this area, which traces the origin of all the people from the two sons of an old woman who impregnated herself by means of a banana, is literally believed. It is admitted that this story belongs to times long past, but in a discussion arising out of its narration the opinion was expressed among the audience that it was still possible for a woman to conceive by means of a banana, and the same thing was asserted by an altogether different informant on another occasion, when we were discussing ceremonies and taboos associated with birth. The connexion between bananas and child-bearing appears again in the ceremony for a girl's first menstruation, when the girl climbs a banana palm of a species whose fruit may never be eaten by children, or by boys wearing the *upi* (see p. 254). In discussing certain prohibitions connected with the planting and eating of bananas in the south-eastern Solomons, Ivens suggests that this plant may in the past have possessed a sacred character, and supports his suggestion by citing parallels from other peoples. He need not have gone as far afield

[1] Malinowski records a similar experience (1929, p. 162). The reason given to me, on more than one occasion, for the practice of castrating the domestic pigs, is that it prevents them from becoming wild and running away into the bush, and that if they should do so, it enables the hunters who might catch them in their nets to recognise them as somebody's property and let them go.

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843 the appropriate time which I could obtain was that it took place 'when the woman's belly has grown large'. The first part of it was performed for Sacsac at Kurtatchi on March 13; her baby was born on April 30. Her mother, with whom she was staying, decided when it should be done.

843 A man is sent out into the bush to catch a young opossum. It must be brought to the village alive. Then a woman takes hold of 825 the live opossum and rubs its back against the abdomen of the 842 expectant mother. No particular woman, relative or otherwise, was specified as suitable for this duty, but in the case of Sacsac it was performed by her mother. It must be done just before sunrise. After rubbing the animal up and down several times against the woman's abdomen, the operator lets it fall to the ground. This represents the birth of the child. The people standing round ask: 'What sort of child is it?' If the opossum is a male, the woman says: 'It is a boy', if a female, she says: 'It is a girl.' This is supposed to be prognostic of the sex of the expected child, but my informants admitted that it was not always correct! I was not able to ascertain any views held by these natives as to the determination of sex, apart from this performance, and as far as I could ascertain the sex of the opossum was regarded only as an indication, not as a cause, of the sex of the baby.

843 The opossum is then killed by having its head struck on the 825 ground. Its hair is singed off, and it is boiled in a pot with some taro. Its flesh must be eaten only by women who have borne [262] children without difficulty, otherwise the mother's delivery will be a hard one. In the case of Sacsac, her mother, who has had seven children, six of whom are living, ate most of it. The pregnant woman herself must drink the water in which the opossum has [302] been boiled. Then her hair is cut short all round her head just above the ears, and is smeared all over with black paint. Up to this time she has not been allowed to use paint on her head.

843 Then she goes to the sea and washes. She looks for a gap in the reef where the water is pouring in towards the shore very rapidly. 782 Over this she must jump. The action is said to have the effect of shaking up the child so that when it is born delivery will take place quickly. Meanwhile, the women have been collecting all the débris from the food that has been cooked in connexion with the ceremony (the leaves and peelings of the taro, the bones of the opossum, &c.). Some of them carry it down to the sea, accompanying the pregnant

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CUSTOMS CONCERNING FOOD

843 During pregnancy a woman may not eat the megapode (*iowa*) nor the fish called *turō*. Her husband should also observe this rule.
262 No reason was given for this taboo. The woman must also abstain from a sea-creature called *awaian*, which is described as like a little snake, and living among the stones in the sea. This taboo would appear to have arisen for a reason like that which forbids a pregnant Trobriand woman to eat certain kinds of fish: 'Just as it is difficult to haul these fish out of their hiding-places, so the baby would not easily be brought forth.' (Malinowski, 1929, p. 193.) A pregnant
843 woman must on no account eat a certain frog called *toktok*, which
262 frequents banana palms. It has unusually long legs, and it is
825 thought that if she eats it her child will have legs of abnormal length.[1] Another kind of frog, *kakō*, which lives in pools in the bush, is specially recommended; if she eats it her child will be large and the period of pregnancy pass easily.

844 While labour is in progress the husband must abstain from food
262 of any kind. The woman's mother, whether present at the confinement or not, must abstain from eating pig.

846 After the birth, for an indeterminate period ('while the baby is very small'), the parents may not eat pig, fish, opossum, shell-fish,
262 or barringtonia fruit. Why the last-named should be included my informants did not know. The effect of the other prohibitions is to confine the parents to a vegetarian diet; this is thought to be of
[276 advantage to the child. The mother is subjected to further restric-
824] tions. She must chew with her areca-nut only the leaf of the betel-pepper, not touching the catkin-like fruit, which is much preferred in the ordinary way. The reason given for this change is that the fruit is stronger than the leaf, and might harm the mother's milk. The nursing mother must also abstain from bananas and canarium almonds. While awaiting Manēv's confinement I was frequently given presents of both these things, which I shared with the expectant mother, to her great enjoyment, but her friend, Ema, who was constantly with us, would never accept any, saying that she was forbidden to eat them because she had a suckling child.

The mother's first meal after her confinement is the occasion of peculiar care. It consists of soup (*siro*), i.e. the water in which the

[1] Little girls are taught by their mothers to avoid this creature. Any unmarried person who eats it will not find favour with the opposite sex.

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taro has been cooked, and taro which has been boiled, not roasted in the embers. The taro for this meal, which must, in consequence of the prohibitions above mentioned, be eaten without its usual relish of fish or flesh, is brought home wrapped up in leaves, so that it is never exposed to view in the open air. The reason given for this precaution is that if it were so exposed, Manu, the big brown eagle, might see it, in which case the child would die. It will be remembered that Manu is the most important totem among these people, but the precaution is taken irrespective of the clan to which the child belongs. Manu appears to be regarded in this connexion as a being of whom the people are afraid, and who has power to harm the new member of the community. The importance of this first meal is further emphasized by the fact that the baby's mother's father, if available, is considered the appropriate person to go and fetch the taro, a task which under ordinary circumstances is never performed by a man. It is brought into the hut by the front or men's entrance (*tagoan*), instead of, as would happen in the usual course of things, by the women's entrance (*babots*).

COUVADE

As soon as the expectant mother feels the pains beginning, her husband must stop working, and remain indoors, not in the hut where his wife is confined, but in that of another of his wives, or of a neighbour. He must spend his time in sitting idle or dozing, and must on no account carry, or even lift, anything heavy, or touch a knife, axe, or any sharp or pointed instrument. To do the former would injure the child, the latter would cause it to die. This continues for three days. On the fourth day he may go into the hut and see his child. After this he is allowed to walk about the village, but must not go outside it. He must still refrain from working. On the fifth day he goes, with his wife, and washes in the sea; these are his first ablutions since the child was born. Then he may take an axe or a knife and go into the hut and pretend to cut the child; this removes the taboo on his use of sharp instruments, and he may now resume his usual activities. In the case of the child whose birth is described in the previous pages, this cutting was not done till the morning of the sixth day, but in discussions on the subject the fifth day was always stated as the appropriate time. It would appear, therefore, that five days is the minimum for the observance of couvade.

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ing (Pl. 18*b*). Before a child who is *tsunaun* can do this, a ceremony must be performed (this is described on pp. 189–93), but nothing of the sort is needed in the case of a commoner. 854

The women do all sorts of hard work with their babies on their backs. I have seen them chopping wood with a child of apparently less than a year clinging pick-a-back fashion without being held. A mother who takes a very young child out on to the reef in the heat of the day, will generally keep its head carefully covered by her hood.

CHILDREN'S DIET

A child will be given taro, which has first been chewed to a pulp, on the very day of its birth. The quantity is soon increased. A woman will place a row of little heaps of this chewed pulp all along her thigh, as she sits on the ground, each of these forming a mouthful for the baby on her lap. Food thus prepared is called *mimi*, a word with which the baby soon becomes familiar, and one of the first he learns to say. Coco-nut, chewed in the same way, is added at an early age, but a child is not allowed to munch taro or coco-nut for itself until it can run about. 853 262

Until the child is about a year old he must not eat bananas, lest he should be afflicted with a disease of the chest called *bira*. A child that has yaws must not be given pig or fish, and must not take its food in any house except that of its parents. It must on no account eat in the presence of a woman who is pregnant, and it must not be given taro from a house in which a man and a woman have recently indulged in sexual intercourse. Since yaws is very contagious, some of these prohibitions have a practical bearing, but in the minds of the natives the harm that would follow the breaking of them is supposed to fall upon the child and not on the persons it must avoid. [753]

Babies of a few months old are given the husks of areca-nuts to suck. Children of five or six chew the nut itself freely, and also smoke both cigarettes and pipes. [276]

As soon as the household gets going in the morning, the children are given lumps of taro cooked the night before; these they usually eat cold. They chew coco-nuts at all times of the day, and drink the contents of the green nut when they are thirsty. They share the main meal of the day, usually taken at sundown, with the other members of the family. 262 272 264

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526 branch. I have also seen them play with a tree inverted, so that its
857 spreading roots were uppermost; the game was to climb to the top
481 of the root and stand upright, quite a feat of balancing, since the trunk was far from steady (Pl. 15).

857 As usual, there are many games based on imitation of their
524 elders. A favourite amusement among the small boys is to truss up one of their number and carry him about on a pole, as their fathers carry pigs. Usually they do not get very far before the struggles of the victim throw the whole lot of them over, amid shrieks of laughter, and sometimes howls.

Sometimes rough attempts are made to construct tiny huts for the purpose of playing at house, but those I saw were very unskilfully put together, and speedily fell to pieces. But once, up in the mountains, I saw what was clearly a children's playhouse, constructed by adults, a small edition of the usual native hut, complete with little plank-beds, beside which lay pipes and materials for chewing the betel-mixture! I was told that sometimes a group of little girls will go off by themselves and build leaf huts in the bush or on the shore, and live there for several days, catching crabs and small fish on the reef, and lizards or other small creatures in the bush, bringing some of these back to the village to exchange for taro, which they take away with them to cook for themselves. This was not done while I was there, but I have sometimes seen a couple of little girls take a bit of broken pot and boil small pieces of taro in it, carefully wrapped up in leaves in imitation of the procedure adopted by their mothers. Great was the joy of one little lady to whom I gave an empty soup tin for the purpose. Both boys and girls like to catch small crabs and roast them over a fire, or hold
● [262] them in the flame of coco-nut palm leaf torches. Grasshoppers are also caught and roasted in the same manner.

Acting.

Many children are excellent mimics, an accomplishment which is much appreciated by their audience, both children and adults. After the annual visit of inspection of the Governor, the Petats children enacted the whole occasion in most amusing fashion. A row of small ones was drawn up, to represent the parade of villagers which is always a feature of the day. One carried a bit of rag on a pole for a flag. The older child impersonating the Governor had a large umbrella very cleverly made out of leaves spiked through

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here described as nearly as I could ascertain in the order in which they would be performed.

1. *At birth.*

While a woman *tsunaun* is in labour, every one in the village abstains from food. As soon as the child is born, the slit-gong is beaten, and a feast is held, with food provided by the child's relatives. Any one connected with the child, both on its mother's and its father's side, will contribute food, and the more food provided the greater is the prestige. The food is distributed among the people of the village, and there is a *kōma* that night. For the birth of a commoner there is no general fasting, no slit-gong, no feast, and no *kōma*.

2. *At first washing.*

All the people of the village, both men and women, must abstain from eating pig and fish till the child is washed on the fifth day. Then a pig is killed, and cooked in a pot, not roasted as is the general method of cooking pigs for feasts. All the women prepare large quantities of taro. A fire is made, small pieces of taro, pig, and fish are placed in the fire, and the *urar* of all the important people of the child's clan, not only those who died long since, but also those who have not long been dead, are called upon by name, with the adjuration:

'Komu tsura, nom en a tamū, a ta gū, a ta ien, sa
Here is fire, you eat taro, pig, fish, so that
naban en sas ta ta ien to babēn ner, a ta gū mē.'
the people (may) eat again fish forbidden, pig also.

The *urar* hear this; they come and eat what has been burned. This lifts the taboo on eating flesh foods for the people of the village and for the child's relatives, except its parents.

3. *In the early days.*

'While it is still a new baby', there is a ceremony involving those of its relatives who stand to the child in the relationship called *watʃitʃio*, in particular its mother's mother's brother's daughters. The men of the village go out on to the reef and catch a number of the tiny fish called *karios*. These are about the size of a large minnow, and are usually regarded as not worth catching, except by small children for fun. They are brought to the child's hut,

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places, carrying spears, bows and arrows, knives, and trade axes, which they call tomahawks. Those who were not fortunate enough to possess these treasures carried sticks cut from the bush, with leaves still attached to them. Their faces were painted in various patterns, a striking effect being obtained by a bright red (carmine) obtained from the Chinese stores, covering both ears. Nearly every one had a spot of red (*oin*) on both temples; this is a protection against the dangers of the road.

We went on till we came to a village called Kinopawpaw. On its outskirts we found a platform made of boughs, on which were placed a large number of coco-nut-leaf baskets. These were full of roast pig, cooked taro, and ceremonial pudding. Others contained the eggs of the bush fowl (megapode), done up in leaves. Huge bunches of areca-nut, yellow and green, hung from the posts of the platform, together with bundles of betel-pepper leaves. All along the edge of the platform there were coco-nuts. The whole effect was one of lavish abundance, as was intended. This food was provided by the group holding the ceremony, for the benefit of those who came from long distances to attend it.

Our crowd approached the platform with much shouting and brandishing of weapons. They were met by a band who had arrived before us, and a sham fight took place. Then we all sat down and food was distributed. Presently a fresh crowd arrived, every one jumped up and rushed out to meet them, and another sham fight took place. This happened whenever a new contingent came up.

We remained there till darkness had fallen; fresh contingents arrived at frequent intervals, each necessitating the staging of another fight. Finally we started off down a narrow track, in single file, our way lighted by torches made of the dried leaves of the coco-nut palm, and the hurricane lanterns carried by our own party, a less picturesque but more dependable form of illumination. The track was level for a while, then it began to go up and down, with creeks in the valleys, some bridged by logs, some to be forded. Progress was at the rate of about two miles an hour, or less, with frequent halts. Presently we came to an avenue of areca-nut palms. These trees the men in the forefront of the procession proceeded to cut down and strew over the road, though some of them were bearing. It seemed a piece of wanton destruction, but as the owners of the trees were among the destroyers, it was clearly part of the business. They did not gather the areca-nuts from the

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II. *Regulations concerning food.*

When they first put on the hat, the boys may not eat opossum, but this prohibition is removed as soon as their hair has grown a little. It may be, though it was not stated by my informants, that this taboo has arisen because the cuscus opossum has very short fur, with the idea that if they were to eat the animal before their hair had grown beyond the length of the fur, it would never attain greater length than this. Even after they are permitted to eat opossum, it must be cooked in an oven; they may not touch any 'possum meat that has been roasted in the embers or boiled in a pot. Pig is allowed them cooked in any fashion.

Fish may be partaken of freely, cooked in any manner, except that certain specified kinds are totally prohibited. These are: *harawa*, *sosoa* (garfish), *toro*, *poa*, and *usey*. I could elicit no reason for the prohibition of these particular fish. They are not rare, neither are they especially highly prized as articles of food. It is noteworthy that there is no prohibition on the eating of bonito.

The boys may eat fruit, except a certain variety of banana called *masõn*, the fruit of the banana palm used in the girl's first menstruation ceremony. The relation between bananas and sexual matters has been referred to in another connexion—it is because of this that the fruit is prohibited to the *upi* boys.

There is also a taboo upon the eating of canarium almonds, until a ceremony has been performed whereat the boys are given nuts to eat in public. If this rule is broken it is said that their hair will not grow. I could discover no reason why such a result was supposed to follow. It may be that it was used as a deterrent, and that the taboo is for disciplinary purposes. Since canarium almonds are eaten with the greatest relish by everybody, it represents a very real deprivation; but, on the other hand, nothing was said by any of my informants about the idea of discipline, in discussing the regulations enforced at this stage, though it entered very definitely into the dietary restrictions imposed during the seclusion prior to the *wapi* ceremony, as this was clearly stated more than once in our discussions on these matters. Perhaps one might venture to conjecture that, like some of the Australian food taboos, it may originally have been devised with a view to conserving the supply of nuts for the benefit of the rest of the village. Seeing that the boys of Bougainville do not differ fundamentally from boys

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882 elsewhere, and that opportunities for eating the forbidden nuts with little danger of discovery are legion, I suspect that this rule is more 262 honoured in theory than in practice, in spite of the urgent necessity of having a good growth of hair to show at the *watawutʃ*. But considerable stress was laid upon it in all our talks upon the subject, and its theoretical importance is also clear from the fact that fathers, and, less frequently, mothers of boys wearing the hat will voluntarily refrain from eating canarium almonds in sympathy with their sons. Sobak and his wife Tsonakets were doing so while I was in residence at Kurtatchi.

882 264 177 In the olden days the *upi* boys might never be seen in the act of eating, but had to take their food into the *tobar* and consume it in private. They were not allowed to handle knives, so it was the duty of their *amro* to cut up their food for them. This custom is no longer observed.

882 276 They may chew the betel-mixture, but must use with it only the leaves of the betel-pepper, not the fruit, which is preferred under ordinary circumstances.

III. *Regulations concerning personal appearance.*

882 302 The hair of the boys is never cut or trimmed from the time they go into the bush before the *wapi* ceremony until it is ceremonially cut short at the *wasipsip*. It is pushed up underneath the *upi*, except for a few straggling ends on neck and forehead.

593 302 The fathers of boys wearing the *upi* sometimes lay themselves under a similar prohibition as regards cutting their hair, which they tie up into a knot on the top of the head. This method of hair-dressing is seen in Plate 52. Mothers do not cut their hair over the temples, and do not put paint on it. This custom is not obligatory upon either sex, and is followed only by a few.

826 824 789 There are certain 'medicines' for making the hair grow long, of which the following is a typical example:

Take the long (tap) root of the plant *niyowan* (unidentified). Chew the end of it with the betel-mixture, spit out the resulting mash into your hand and put it inside the hat, pushing it well up to the top. It will pull up the hair and make it grow longer. The longer the root you chew, the longer your hair will be.

882 302 The boys may not wear red paint on their hair, or white paint on their temples, except as prescribed for the various ceremonies, when it is put on by their *amro*. In one case the *amro* of a boy

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happened, and asks her: 'You are bleeding, aren't you?' The girl does not speak, she is afraid, but she nods her head. Her mother asks her: 'Did you see the blood when you got up this morning?' Then her mother tells the other women: 'The girl has broken.' All the women are glad. They call out, and jump about, and shout, and say: 'By-and-by we shall eat a big pig, and have a dance.' They are all glad about the girl, and as they go to work they talk about her, and are pleased.

The girl's mother gives her a little taro, secretly, saying to her: 'You eat it up quickly and don't let any one see you do it.' After that she must go hungry, she must not eat any more. She is forbidden to eat taro, coco-nuts, bananas, pig, or fish, and she must not drink. All that she can have is a kind of areca-nut, which is not strong, and has water in it, so that it moistens her tongue. (This is not the kind of areca-nut which is usually chewed, but a smaller variety, called *gagmorat*, *gag* = drink.)

Two children keep her company and go hungry along with her. They must belong to her clan. Both must be too young to menstruate. The girl's mother, father, brothers and sisters (blood and classificatory), and grandparents do not eat either. For a commoner this is enough, but for a girl who is *tsunaun* all the village goes hungry. This fast goes on for about two days, until a certain part of the ceremony is over.

When the girl's mother goes to draw water in the evening, she must take all the water-coco-nuts (see p. 289) and hide them in another hut. If she does not want to do this, she must pour away all the water that is not used immediately. If she left any of it in the hut, the girl might steal some and drink it, and that would be very bad for her, for then her blood would flow all the time and would not dry up. The two children who are keeping the girl company may drink a little secretly, without letting the girl see them, and they may eat a little taro also in the same way. After two days the girl may eat a little specially prepared taro, which her mother brings to her secretly, and may drink a very little water, enough to make her tongue cold.

The girl and her two companions must stay inside the hut for five days and nights. If she is a commoner four will be enough. She must sit all the time doing nothing, and must not leave the hut at all except to relieve herself. When this is necessary she puts on a hood, and goes no farther than the back of the hut. One of the

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VIII

DIET, COOKING, AND MEALS

THE people of Buka and North Bougainville are acquainted with white man's food in the shape of canned meat and rice, which are served as rations to those working as indentured labourers, and are occasionally seen even in the villages, either brought home by returned labourers, or purchased at a trader's store. But except for this, the natives are still entirely dependent for their food supply on what they can obtain by their own exertions, either individual or concerted, from their immediate environment. Thanks to the climatic and geographical conditions under which they live, they are not often faced with actual scarcity, but the provision of their daily bread requires constant activity, and occupies, even at the best of times, a large portion of their waking lives, while the amassing of a quantity of food such as is required for any special occasion causes them no little anxiety.

Except, possibly, for the addition of a few fruits, brought into the country of later years by the whites, their diet has probably not changed appreciably since the introduction of the pig. The list which follows does not claim to be exhaustive, but it is at least fully representative, and I do not think that any item of importance has been omitted.

LIST OF FOODSTUFFS

(The native terms are given in the Kurtatchi dialect)

1. *Vegetables, nuts, and fruit*

Taro (*tamū*)
Sweet potato (*kumar*)
Tuber resembling a potato (*durun*)
Yam (*ta'oie*) [or *rurun*)
Bread-fruit (*kassis*)
Pumpkins and squashes (*uetan*)
Sugar-cane (*mayoy*)
Mushrooms, several varieties (generic term *kūmū*)
Leaves of taro and other plants (*kuhun*)
Heart of coco-nut palm
A species of seaweed
Coco-nut (generic term *ūir*)
Canarium almond (*winoa*)
Indian almond (Terminalia catappa) (*kōt*)
Barringtonia (*kurū*)
Banana (generic term, *uerton* or
Passion fruit (wild) [*pa'un*)
Mango (*ma'at*)
Pawpaw (*waaniok*)
Orange and lime (pidgin-English term *moli* or *mavi* used)

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2. *Flesh food*

262 Pig (*gū*)
Opossum (*manī*)
Flying fox (*tsūbak*)
Small variety of bat (*pupūtū*)
Iguana (*biro*)
Frogs, several kinds (generic term *kūrŋa*) and tadpoles (*boboi*)
Insects of grasshopper species (*koka*)
Large white grub found in decaying wood (*pa'oa*)
Many kinds of birds (generic term *nōwan*)

3. *Sea food*

Many kinds of fish (generic term *ien*)
Many kinds of shell-fish (generic term *kesa*)
Crabs (generic term *kuri*)
Turtles (*gurūt*)
Sharks (*hes*) (occasionally)

NOTES ON THE LIST OF FOODSTUFFS

1. *Vegetables, nuts, and fruit*

262 Taro (*Colocasia esculenta*, or *antiquorum*) may be considered the staple food, since no meal, whatever else is included, is complete without it, and it will, if necessity arises, suffice for a meal by itself. But most people are not contented unless they have either fish or flesh as a relish (*kabu* or *warit*) to eat with it. Its cultivation occupies a very large proportion of the working time of both men and women, the men in clearing and fencing, the women in planting, weeding, and gathering. Many varieties of taro are known, differentiated by the colour of the tubers, or of the stalks or leaves, not according to taste or properties. One woman gave the names of twelve varieties in her garden, showing me each in turn from a heap she had just gathered, and pointing out their special characteristics. She said there were many more which she had not got in her garden.

137 The giant caladium, very similar in appearance to the cultivated taro, except that it grows much taller, and that its leaves are much larger, grows wild in the bush. It is known as *wiar* ('bush taro'). Its tubers are never eaten. The leaves attain a length of several feet, and are often used by the natives as umbrellas.

251 The women bring up each day from the taro garden only enough to last till the next day, or at most for two days. Probably because this quantity is as much as a woman can carry, no attempt is made to maintain a surplus store, although the tubers would keep for some time. One day the women could not go to the taro garden because some business connected with the *upi* made it dangerous

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for them to be on the road. The next day, several had to get up and go down early because they had nothing to eat.

In the case of those villages which are unfortunate in not possessing sufficient land of suitable quality for growing enough taro to meet their requirements, the women make regular trips to trade with the women of other villages, obtaining taro in exchange for other commodities, chiefly fish. Details of this system of barter will be found in Chapter XII.

The usual methods of cooking taro are either to boil it in a native pot (lined with banana leaves, which also cover the top, tucked in over the contents), or to roast it by laying it on the embers of a smouldering fire. In both cases it is first peeled or scraped (*kuiskuis*) with a knife (*nanes*) made of a black-lip oyster-shell which has been ground down to the hard pearly surface by rubbing on rough coral (Pl. 38, no. 3). These knives are preferred to trade knives for this purpose; the women say the trade knives spoil the taro. Two other kinds of shells, a conus (no. 4) and a dolium (no. 5), are occasionally used instead of the black-lip oyster. Taro is also cooked in a native oven (*ta'ō*). When a woman wishes to make such an oven (*nog a ta'ō*), she first scrapes out a hollow in the ground, probably inside the hut at the women's end of it, and then builds up a framework of sticks in it, by laying in two lines of sticks and some cross-pieces. This is then lighted from a smouldering log or the embers of a fire; when it has flamed up she places a quantity of round stones, about the size of a hen's egg, in the flames, and also throws on taro parings to make it flame up well. When the wood is burnt away and the stones are hot, water is thrown on the flames to make them die down and to produce steam, the food to be cooked is laid on the hot stones, and the whole is covered up with some of the hot stones and the dirt from the floor which was displaced in making the hole. The oven is left thus for several hours, being generally prepared in the evening and opened up on the following morning. When the cooked food has been taken out, the stones are carefully put away in a corner of the hut for future use.

Taro is never eaten raw; it would be as unpalatable as our own potatoes in the same state. It is liked either hot or cold, and is frequently prepared beforehand, placed in a basket made of plaited coco-nut leaves, and hung up in the rafters of the hut until required later in the day; it is not, however, kept for more than about twenty-four hours.

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oven prepared as above described. The scrapings of the coco-nut from which the liquid has been squeezed are eaten with great relish by the pigs. When thoroughly cooked, the packages are removed from the oven and kept in their wrappings until required for use, but they will not remain good for more than a few hours, so must be made not earlier than the day before they are required. When made up in the form of balls, the pudding is called *ararov*, in the form of the flat slabs which come out of the frames it is known as *menak*, or both kinds may be referred to as *kokoin*, a word which belongs to another dialect but is current throughout the area, being used in speaking pidgin-English.

This ceremonial pudding is the indispensable adjunct of every special occasion. It is either consumed on the spot, or given to visiting parties to take home with them. Presents of it are taken by guests to their host, who is required to reciprocate with similar packages on some future occasion. It is sometimes made especially for some individual as a mark of honour. Taro cooked in the ordinary way is always eaten along with it, as we eat bread with with some rather richly prepared dish. *Menak* is also made by using crushed canarium almonds instead of coco-nuts. This is considered a very great delicacy; it can be enjoyed only while the almonds are available.

Sweet potato and yam. These do not grow so readily here as in other parts of Bougainville, and are considered rather as a change from taro when they happen to be procurable, perhaps from other places by barter, than as staples of diet. I saw no yam vines equal in size or quantity to those of the mountain villages behind Kieta; the natives of the north coast say the soil is not very suitable for them. They are cooked in the same manner as taro, i.e. either boiled or roasted, but are not greatly enjoyed, being tough and stringy.

Bread-fruit (*Artocarpus*, several species) is very much liked while it is available, making a welcome change from taro, which is eaten in smaller quantities during the bread-fruit season. The trees seem to be in bearing almost continuously, one crop starting after the other has fallen, but they take some time to ripen, so that the fruit is not always ready. During my year of residence bread-fruit was eaten in October and in January, but the time when it was most plentiful was during July and August. At the end of the latter month in walking through rather unfrequented portions

262 of the bush, bread-fruits were to be seen lying about on the ground in large quantities in various stages of rottenness, where no one had chanced to pass that way to pick them up.

222 412 The bread-fruits are obtained by climbing the tree and knocking them down; those above hand reach are hooked off by jerking them from their stalks with a stick lashed, pointing backwards, on to the end of a long pole.

252 Bread-fruit is cooked by being laid on the top of a fire of sticks, directly exposed to the flames (Pl. 34). When the outer skin is completely charred, the inside is done to their liking. The blackened skin is scraped off with a black-lip oyster-shell knife, and the soft inside pulled to pieces with the fingers and eaten in great hunks. [262] The large seeds it contains are very much relished. They may be eaten as they are, or cooked again by being laid in the embers, just as we roast chestnuts, which they strongly resemble both in look and flavour. Bread-fruit is never pounded or made into pudding.

262 Leaves eaten as vegetables. Although the taro plant is cultivated principally for the sake of the tubers, its leaves are also used as food. Other kinds of leaves, grown in the taro garden or wild in the bush, are likewise eaten, also the tender tips of some species of bracken (*Pteris*). They are prepared by being boiled in pots with water, generally sea-water, or with the addition of some sea-water, for the sake of the salt. When done, they look and taste not unlike spinach. In the mountains, where there is no pottery, they are cooked by being thrust into a length of bamboo, without water, the bamboo being then laid on the fire. As I know from experience, the resulting dish is both succulent and tasty. (I was told that pig, cut into small pieces, is also cooked in this way, but I did not see it done.) I have never seen this method of cooking in bamboo without water in use among the coast natives, where it is not necessary since they can obtain, from the women of Malasang, pots in which to boil their food.

252 824 [263] [323] [184] 439

262 252 Nobody would deliberately cut down a coco-nut palm in order to eat its heart, but if one is blown down, or has to be removed for any reason, the heart is hacked out and eaten with great enjoyment, either raw, or, more frequently, boiled like taro, in a pot lined with leaves.

262 [222] There is a species of seaweed which can be obtained from the reef at low tide, which is eagerly sought for and eaten just as it comes from the reef, in spite of, or perhaps because of, its saltness.

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Unfortunately, I omitted to bring home a specimen for identification. It consists of tiny green globules, and looks not unlike a bunch of grapes in the earliest stages of formation. Guppy (1887, p. 89) mentions an alga, a species of *Caulerpa*, as being eaten with relish by the natives of Treasury Island, which from his description may be the same or perhaps an allied species.

There are some varieties of edible fungi; they are not cultivated or made objects of special search, but if seen in the course of a journey through the bush, will be gathered and taken home. I cannot find in my notes any reference to the method employed in cooking them. Most of the fungi growing in the bush are avoided and are thought to be poisonous.

By far the most important of all the nuts available, and in the front rank of their foodstuffs, is the coco-nut. The meat, especially that of the nuts in the green stage, when it is soft and creamy, is a permanent stand-by as an article of diet, and at a later stage it is used in making ceremonial pudding. The cool sweetish liquid inside a green nut provides a most refreshing drink, which, fortunately, can be obtained all the year round. The nuts are procured by climbing the trunk and knocking them down. Climbing is assisted by tying a bit of fibre round the feet, which then grasp the trunk, the body is supported by the grip thus obtainable, while both hands reach up as far as possible, grasp the trunk above the head, and pull the body up towards them, till the knees are bent so as nearly to touch them, the feet then taking another hold. Men and women, boys and girls, are all very skilful at doing this, but the older men send the small boys up if there are any about. The nuts are opened in this way: the outer sheath is removed by impaling it on a stick sharpened to a point and stuck in the ground at a suitable angle. Having removed this outer covering, the opener takes a trade knife, and with two or three sharp taps, cuts off a piece of the top of the shell as we slice the top off a boiled egg. The liquid is then drunk straight from the nut. If there is no knife handy, two of the 'eyes' will be pierced with a stick or sharp stone, but drinking is then a much slower process, and the other is preferred.

Canarium almonds are esteemed a great delicacy and the time when they are ripe is eagerly anticipated. This is one of the few products that are not available all the year round. During the time of my residence, the first nuts were brought in on May 14, and the

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crop was just about finished when I left at the end of September. Throughout the season they are brought in every day in large quantities, women and girls walking many miles to collect them, and spending hours hunting for them among the fallen leaves and underbrush that cover the ground everywhere in the bush (*ahuit winoa* = to gather almonds from the ground). I went with them on many occasions, and can testify to their diligence. The trees are much prized, and are always left standing when a patch of ground is cleared for a new taro garden.

The nuts are cracked with a stone or a lump of coral. They are always eaten immediately, unless it is desired to use them to make ceremonial pudding, when they are grated on rough coral, or pounded, and mixed with taro. So far as I know, these people do not store the nuts for future use, or smoke them as is done at Sa'a (Ivens, 1927, p. 367).

Ceremony for first almonds.

Up till recently a ceremony was performed, corresponding with that described by Ivens for the SE. Solomons (p. 367), on the occasion of the ripening of the first almonds. Owing to the disapproval of the native mission teacher, it did not take place in the year of my residence, but I obtained the following account of it.

When the first ripe nuts are discovered, probably by finding on the ground some whose fleshy, purple outer covering has been eaten by the pigeons, who throw down the hard centre, men collect stones suitable for cracking the almonds, and take them to the bush. Some of them climb the tree whose nuts are ripe first. Others stay below. Those in the tree throw down a large number of nuts and then come down and join those below. Some crack the nuts, others bring them to the men who are busy cracking them. The women must stop in the village, except for a few who go to the garden to bring back a supply of taro.

When the men have cracked plenty of almonds, they get a leaf of the bush banana and pour all the kernels into it. They all hold it by its edges and stretch it out to its full length. Two logs are cut and laid on the ground parallel to one another; short pieces of wood are laid on top of these transversely. The leaf full of almonds is laid on these transverse logs, and covered up with another banana leaf. The two leaves and their contents are then tied firmly together with rough cane or creeper, and the supporting logs are taken

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524 a coco-nut palm is hung up on a branch, and the tops are thrown at it. There are also competitions to see whose top spins longest. The grown men join the children in this game, but the women are [562 not allowed to play it. After this top spinning becomes general; 184] it is not played for some time previously. (At Petats they did not observe this rule.)

574 The 'time of the almond' is also made the occasion for reciprocal feasts between friendly villages, which have more of a social than of a ceremonial character. The older men will say to the boys: 'You fellows go and get a lot of almonds and make a Tukis.' (Tukis is the name of a group of tiny creatures somewhat similar to our hobgoblins; they are discussed in Chapter XV.) So the boys go to the bush and collect a great quantity of nuts, and bring them to the village, and arrange them on the ground in the central space, in the form of a man; they make his head, and his body, and his arms, and his legs. Then the people of the village all paint themselves with [302 red and black paint, and they play Pan-pipes, and walk round as 533] they do at a *kōma*, while they are cracking the nuts. This is one of the very few occasions on which they *kōma* in daylight; usually it is only done at night. They invite the people of a neighbouring village, who all come with Pan-pipes and join in the *kōma*. Then every one feasts on the nuts. A short time after, the village which was thus invited gives a similar feast in its turn, and asks the people of the former village. After this, if the boys, who naturally much enjoy these festive occasions, ask the *tsunaun* if they may have another, they are told: 'No, our guests have returned the one we gave before, we cannot have another now.'

262 Most of the many varieties of bananas are eaten either raw or 252 cooked, but there are some, including one very large plantain (*kay*), which are not palatable until cooked. These are usually boiled in a pot, skin and all. A smaller yellow kind (*tomra*) is usually skinned before being laid on hot embers to roast.

177 Oranges and limes grow in the vicinity of most villages and are much appreciated by the natives. They are always eaten raw. 262 The oranges do not change colour when ripe, but remain green; the inside is pale, somewhat resembling the colour of a grape-fruit. They are sweet and juicy. I understand that they are not indigenous, as is also the case with the pawpaw (*Carica Papaya*). This is eaten raw, like a melon, and generally while still, according to our ideas, very far from ripe.

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Mangoes grow in the bush, but do not, so far as I know, receive any attention, though the locality of each tree is known. When passing anywhere near one, most people will turn aside to gather the fruit. They like to dip it into their lime-pot before taking a bite; this is said to add to the flavour.

Pumpkins and some forms of marrow grow in the taro garden, and in some places are found wild in the bush; possibly these are escapes. They were sometimes offered to me, but are not much used or liked.

Sugar-cane is available. Bits of it are sucked with great relish. It is tough and stringy and not very sweet; probably it suffers from lack of attention. No use is made of it except to suck sections of the cane as we eat sweets.

The long narrow fruit of the small-leaved mangrove (*parii*), which goes red when it is ripe, is collected, skinned, and put into a basket, then it is left in the sea overnight; next morning it is washed in fresh water, boiled, and eaten as a relish, with coco-nut meat.

A small Chili pepper (*nubo*) is used to flavour the water in which other food has been boiled, this liquid is then partaken of at the meal.

2. *Flesh food*

Unless some one chances to kill a wild pig in casual hunting, pig-meat is a luxury reserved for special occasions. Domestic pigs are never killed except for a feast of considerable importance. The prestige of an important feast depends upon the number of pigs that have been killed for it. If enough cannot be procured from the village supply, or caught by the hunters, the natives will, at the present time, pay as much as £10 or £12 of our money—earned as wages in serving as indentured labourers—to a trader or planter who will sell them one.

Unless they have been wounded, wild pigs caught in the bush are generally brought into the village alive. The method of carrying them is to tie the forelegs together, and the hind legs together, and swing the animal on a pole put between the legs. A pig will perhaps be brought in thus in the morning, thrown down on the ground near a hut, and left there for hours until the men are ready to kill it. Killing is usually done by plunging a spear into the animal's body just behind the uppermost foreleg, as it lies on its

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feast. Sometimes they are eaten as they are, almost raw, sometimes they are cooked a little more, by being placed on the fire a second time.

The procedure of cooking pigs is always the same as that above described. The men always attend to it throughout; women are allowed to be present and to look on, but they never take any part in the work. If several pigs are to be cooked, there may be quite a number of men engaged in the various operations. On one occasion I counted ten men busy over the cooking of four pigs (see Pl. 35).

Opossum are skinned and cleaned before being cooked. The animal is pulled apart at the joints, and each section, with the meat on it, is roasted separately by being laid on the fire and scorched, or wrapped in a package of leaves and cooked slowly in the embers of a smouldering fire. More rarely, they are smoked whole. I once, at a bartering expedition, saw a woman with a load of smoked opossums on her back; they looked exactly like mummied cats. Flying foxes are treated in the same way as opossum, and are much appreciated by the boys wearing the *upi* who may not eat the other animal at a certain stage in their rites. Bats of a smaller variety are cooked, frequently by children, by holding them over a fire. Iguanas are eaten only occasionally, if other flesh food has been scarce.

The bush abounds with insects of the grasshopper family, some reaching a length of 3 or 4 inches. These are considered great delicacies by the children, who toast them by impaling them on sticks held over a fire. They told me that these creatures were *'Tab en a dum tsū-u-u-u-u-u-n!'* 'Something very, very, very good to eat!' Adults are not above eating them when they feel so inclined.

The coast people will not eat snakes (*koro*), but they say the mountain people do so. This, however, was denied by those whom I had an opportunity of questioning on the subject, so it may be only a recognized form of insult. There are a number of stories in my collection dealing with people who inadvertently ate a snake, either by mistake for a *met'on* (sea slug), or through a mean trick played by some one else, who gives the man a piece of snake telling him it is opossum, an impertinence for which the practical joker, in most of the tales, pays with his life.

Several different kinds of frogs are used as food. The generic

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term is *kūra*, which is apparently onomatopoeic, somewhat resembling the noise the creatures make in the bush. Each variety has its own name. One, called *lululaŋitʃ*, is said to come down with the rain. Some kinds have special conventions attached to their consumption (see p. 158).

Birds, especially pigeons, are much appreciated as a relish with taro. They are usually roasted whole on the embers and pulled apart with the fingers. Domestic fowls are rarely eaten, and seem to be kept only for the sake of the cock's tail feathers, which are valued as hair ornaments on ceremonial occasions. The eggs of the domestic fowl are left alone, but those of the little black bush fowl or megapode (*iowa*) are eaten with gusto when nearly ready for hatching. They are done up in little packages of leaves and cooked in hot embers, usually only on festal occasions. I failed to live up to my motto, 'Try anything once', when offered a packet of this delicacy.

When any one walking through the bush comes upon the partly decayed trunk of a fallen tree, he will root about in the soft wood in search of a particular kind of grub, yellowish-white in colour, with a body 2 or 3 inches long and perhaps half an inch thick. These are collected, taken home, and cooked, to serve as an additional 'relish' to the evening taro. They are said to be good eating because they have 'plenty of grease' (*momōna*).

3. *Sea food*

Pig being a luxury usually reserved for feasts, and other flesh food being somewhat scarce and hard to come by, the usual relish to a meal of taro consists of fish. The most highly prized of all fish is the bonito (*atūn*), but a great variety of fish can be obtained and nearly all are eaten. The various methods of catching them are described in Chapter IX.

Fish is generally cooked by being wrapped in leaves and roasted in the embers. I have never seen it being boiled. It may also be slightly smoked, so that it will keep for a short time (but never completely smoke-dried so as to be fit for storage.) In this half-smoked condition it plays the principal part as a medium of barter in the regular exchange of fish and taro which takes place between the women of different villages.

Many varieties of shell-fish are collected on the reef by the women and girls. These are boiled in native pots, and the fish is

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picked out from the shell, after being cooked, with a splinter of wood. The liquid in which they have been boiled (*siro*) is drunk from the pot, spooned up with a half-coco-nut shell or a mussel shell, and is much appreciated. At the end of one such meal I asked my hostess to pick out specimens of all the different kinds of shell-fish which had been in the pot; she gave me nineteen different shells, with the native name of each.

Trepang (*bêche-de-mer*) are very plentiful, but are not used as food. Melanesians are amused at the idea of their being eaten, and laugh at the Chinese for doing so. (There are several Chinese stores in this area, so they are acquainted with this habit.)

Crabs are a frequent addition to a meal; I collected the names of twenty varieties which are eaten. A large land-crab called *amo'on* is especially liked. But the robber-crab (*Birgus latro*), which Guppy (1887, p. 322) reports as being considered a luxury by the Shortland Islanders, is not eaten by the people of the north coast of Bougainville. The question did not arise while I was at Petats, but when we were discussing it at Kurtatchi, on the occasion of the game described on p. 13, my servant said that the Petats people used never to eat them in the past, but the Fijian teacher had said they were good, and now they were much liked 'because they have so much grease'. The hermit-crab (*kubar*) which is very plentiful, and takes possession of almost any shell lying about empty, is never eaten as it is considered dirty.

Turtles are sometimes to be had. They are most easily caught by visiting an island on which they have landed to lay their eggs, when they may be turned on their backs and collected at leisure. I have also several descriptions of a method of catching turtles in a net from a canoe; this involves a man diving so as to lift the creature into the canoe. They say that men sometimes meet their death in this work, by getting caught in the net and finding themselves unable to come to the surface. Turtle meat is cooked by being wrapped in packets of leaves and placed in the embers; the eggs are treated in a similar manner, and are considered a great delicacy. The turtles of this district are mostly of the variety known as 'green-backs', the shells of which are of little or no value commercially.

Crocodiles are not eaten, as a rule, but I was informed that if a crocodile kills or maims a native, and is afterwards caught, his flesh is cooked and eaten, apparently as an insult, in the same

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spirit as that in which a prisoner of war was eaten in the olden days. I was not able to verify this piece of information with regard to the eating of crocodiles.

I have never seen these people eating sharks, but I was told that they sometimes do, and it is referred to in some of the stories in my collection.

SUMMARY OF METHODS OF COOKING

The principal methods of cooking employed by these people may be listed as follows:

turak, to scorch meat on the outside by holding it over the flame, or laying it for a short time in a hot fire.

munmun, to roast more slowly by leaving in the embers of a smouldering fire.

moy, to cook in packages of leaves laid on a slow fire.

pupus, to smoke. (When partial preservation is desired for purposes of barter.)

ta'ō, to cook very slowly in an oven, i.e. a hole in the ground filled with hot stones, and covered with earth.

nosnos, to boil in water in a pot.

With the exception of their use of the water in which shell-fish have been boiled, which they drink as soup, they do not appear to employ methods involving either decoction or infusion in the preparation of their food.

DISCUSSION

With a view to ascertaining whether this diet fulfilled the conditions necessary to health in respect of its vitamin content, I have consulted the table given in the Medical Research Council's Report on Vitamins (published in 1932). Although of course many of the items in my list do not appear there, enough are given to show that all the vitamins are well represented. It is noteworthy that the banana, which is a very frequent constituent of their meals, is a good source of vitamins A, C, and E, contains B_1 and B_2, and is not entirely lacking in D. All the vitamins may also be obtained, in varying richness, from the different parts of the pig which are consumed. The use of citrus fruits and of the leaves of taro and other plants ensures a further supply of C, the latter also of A. Vitamin A is probably the least well represented of the more important vitamins, owing to the entire absence of milk and butter, though it is found in small quantity in the coco-nut, and perhaps

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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in the canarium almond, since it occurs in the European almond. If taro (a species of *Colocasia*) may be compared to dasheen (*Caladium colocasia*), it probably supplies A, B, and C, but only in small amount.

I regret that I did not pay more attention to the daily quantity of food consumed. In times of ceremonial feasting it is very greatly increased, especially as regards flesh foods. At such times every one eats to satiety, and the feast is considered eminently successful if a quantity of food is left over to lie rotting on the ground at its close. A typical meal for a man under ordinary circumstances might consist of five or six medium-sized taro tubers and one or two small fish, the other items appearing occasionally. The enormous preponderance of taro, which is the groundwork of every meal, would, one may suppose, result in an excess of carbohydrates in the diet,[1] but it is noteworthy that 'carbohydrate is the best material to have on hand for muscular activity', and that it is 'from the point of view of physiological economy, the most economical food' (Hutchison and Mottram, '33, p. 58). The protein content of the ordinary everyday meal is rather low, and there is probably a deficiency in the amount of fat provided, which perhaps accounts to some extent for the relish with which lumps of pig's fat are consumed when available.

While on a journey into the mountains of the Kunua district, starting some twenty miles down the west coast, I saw a patch of maize. I was told that it had originally been planted by some men who had brought it back with them on their return from working as indentured labourers. The coast people do not cultivate it, but they might well do so, as Mrs. Hadden was quite successful in her attempts to grow it on her plantation, proving that local conditions are not unsuited to it. In view of the high nutritive value and vitamin content of maize it might be of some benefit to the natives if facilities for obtaining seed could be provided for them; they might then be induced to cultivate and use it as a regular addition to their diet.

It is worthy of note that though the sago-palm grows in this district in considerable numbers, its leaves being much in demand

[1] Maiden (1889, p. 18) gives the following analysis, taken from a descriptive catalogue of the Japanese exhibits at the Health Exhibition, London, 1884: Albumen 1·427; Fat 0·080; Glucose 0·120; Starch 10·400; Pectose, &c. 1·154; Ash 0·987; Water 85·202.

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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137 824 for thatching huts, yet these people do not normally use the pith to make into sago such as is eaten by natives of other parts of the Pacific (Codrington, 1891, p. 320). They neither ate nor prepared any sago while I was with them, and on my questioning them about it said it was eaten only in times of scarcity, when the taro crop had failed. Their distaste for it in normal times is probably due partly to the trouble of preparing it, but also perhaps to the fact that they have already a more than sufficient supply of starch, of which sago contains a high percentage.

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In general it seems justifiable to say that the diet of these people is not seriously defective either in quality or in quantity. From the standpoint of our own eclectic taste, it is somewhat lacking in variety, but this does not seem to trouble the native overmuch, although he is quick to appreciate unaccustomed additions, such as canarium almonds, when they are available. It will be noted that under the climatic conditions here obtaining, where the staple foods can be procured all the year round, the comment made by Dr. Richards (1932, p. 164) in discussing this question—that the diet of the savage, though monotonous during any one season, is subject to the most drastic changes, not only in quantity but also in quality, in the course of the year—hardly applies. The quality of the food of the Bougainville native remains approximately the same throughout the year; the quantity varies, not regularly with the seasons but sporadically with the occurrence of ceremonial occasions, during which, if at no other time, he gets as much to eat as his heart could wish for, and more than his stomach can conveniently hold.

WATER-SUPPLY

312 The villages in the mountains are well supplied with excellent water from streams, but the water-supply constitutes a very real problem in the case of the coast villages of N. Bougainville, except those fortunate enough to be situated near the mouths of the few rivers which run to the sea on the north coast. These are confined to its eastern portion. The people of the western part of the north coast are dependent upon the small pools which are found sporadically in the bush, and this supply they share with dogs, pigs, tadpoles, decayed matter, and all the other denizens of stagnant water in deep shade. A certain amount of decidedly brackish water can also be obtained by digging holes on the shore at low tide, to catch

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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the taro garden with their loads, or from the reef with their little baskets of shell-fish. They begin by fetching firewood from the bush; huge loads are carried on their backs by means of slings of banana fibre hung from both shoulders after the manner of a ruck-sack. The small girls must help in this work, each according to her carrying capacity; they must also bring water. The meal does not differ greatly from that taken in the morning, except that more is eaten. Its main dish is invariably taro, either boiled or roasted, sometimes supplemented by yams, sweet-potato, or green leaves, or bread-fruit when in season. For the much needed 'relish' there will be fish, or shell-fish, or perhaps opossum, if any have been caught during the day.

Meals may be taken either inside or outside the hut, but are most frequently eaten on the women's verandah. They are shared by all the occupants of the hut, without rule of precedence, men and women eating together, and are times of pleasant chat and laughter, especially when the family sits at leisure after their hunger has been satisfied and discusses what is to be done that day, or what has been done, if the day is over. A man and his two wives, who usually occupy adjacent huts, will often share their meal on the verandah of one of them, with the children of both in great evidence. The adolescent girls eat with their parents, and the smaller fry hover about, scrambling on and off the verandah, getting such portions of food as their elders hand over to them. But the family circle is not complete, for the boys wearing the *upi* may not join it. They come to the door at the men's side of the house to have their food handed out to them, then they must take it away and eat it on the verandah of their *tobar*, or where they please, so long as they avoid the proximity of the women. It will be remembered also that persons standing to each other in the relationship of *wagun*, *watʃitʃio*, and *suwan* may not eat in one another's presence (see Chap. II), and that if a woman eats in the presence of her daughter's husband she must do so behind her hood.

Utensils used in the preparation and consumption of food are simple and few. Nowadays an occasional enamel saucepan, and perhaps a cup and a plate or two, will be seen in the villages, brought in by some returned plantation labourer. But most families do their cooking with the aid of native pots, of which they will possess at least two or three of different sizes. For

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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IX

THE FOOD QUEST

262 THE principal constituents of Melanesian diet having been discussed in the previous chapter, the present one will be devoted to a description of the methods by which this food is obtained. Since vegetable produce, and in particular the taro plant, forms by far the greatest part of the diet of these people, this will first be dealt with, followed by hunting and fishing, the means whereby flesh food is provided as a much-needed 'relish' to the vegetable diet.

HORTICULTURE

244 242 Horticultural activities centre mainly round the provision of a sufficient crop of taro for their daily needs, with an excess at certain times for use at ceremonial feasts. This is by no means an easy task. Taro makes heavy demands on the soil, so that in the absence of any knowledge of fertilizers or of the principle of rotation of crops, a patch which has produced a crop of taro cannot be used again till it has had time to recover. In the case of the large [412] taro garden near Kurtatchi, I was told that this particular patch was last cleared by men who used stone axes, long before the oldest men in the village were born, and that it will not be used again till the sons of the present generation of babies are grown men. I suppose that this practice must, at some time or other, have been adopted as the result of experience. At any rate, they know that if you plant again in the same garden too soon the taro will be small and will not grow well.

The result of this policy is that the men and boys must see to it that fresh patches of cleared ground are always ready for the women to replant the stalks of the tubers they take out daily for their household needs. It is not always realized, I think, how large an area of land a primitive community needs to support itself, even if not nomadic. At present the inhabitants of this region have plenty of land at their disposal for the necessary shifting of their gardens, though even now gardens are often several miles from the village to which they belong. But if there should arise in the future any

1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
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great increase in the demand for land for commercial coco-nut plantations, it might become a serious problem. It is the practice of the Government, however, to consider very carefully all requests for land on the part of white people, and in view of the doubtful future of the copra market, the situation may never become acute. Apart from this it would be to the advantage of the natives to learn more intensive methods of using their land, so that the women might be relieved of the necessity of carrying heavy loads of taro several miles back to the village.

A piece of ground which has been cultivated and subsequently left untouched very quickly 'goes back bush', and soon becomes indistinguishable from the rest of the forest. Since the practice of continually changing the locality of the gardens has been continued for a very long time, probably little, if any, of the 'bush' in the north-western corner of Bougainville, where the soil is suitable for taro-growing, is now virgin forest. Most of it is covered with secondary growth, with very few really large trees, but with great quantities of undergrowth and of 'bush banana' plants, which grow very rapidly.

The clearing of the bush is done mainly by the men and boys; the women help by taking out the smaller undergrowth and by removing rubbish. The work of fencing is performed mostly by men. It is very necessary owing to the depredations of the pigs. When this has been done, the subsequent weeding and care of the garden is the women's business, but their menfolk will often give a hand to help them. The young married couple Matarē and Marotē frequently went off to weed their garden together. I sometimes used to go and do a day's work with them, or with other friends, gaining thereby not only useful information, but also the gratitude of the owner of the plot and some much-needed exercise. The following description of one of these occasions is included for the sake of the details it gives of a scene which, apart from my intrusive self, may be regarded as typical: 'This is being written in a taro garden, during a rest between two spells of work. We are sitting on a log under the shade of a banana palm, surrounded by taro plants at all stages of growth. A girl, somewhere in her teens, with a pipe in her mouth and flowers in her hair, is making holes in the ground with the sharpened end of a pole, while another girl drops taro stalks into them. Their bright red loin-cloths make a splash of colour in a picture that is otherwise much too green.

Cannibalism, here as on the other islands of the South Seas, seems not to have originated in the lack of other animal nourishment, but in the need to express the greatest abasement that can be shown to an enemy. To be sure, I know of cases in which cannibalism has become a passion; such cases nevertheless are probably rather isolated. On the other hand, I also know of cases in which natives refused to take part in cannibal meals, not because these meals caused them any moral qualms, but because they simply did not have any taste for this food. On the island of Torotzian the local chieftain is a great warrior who annually undertakes expeditions to Bougainville, which lies opposite, and has no compunction about killing his enemies; yet I know for a fact that he has tasted no human meat since his childhood. He is present when the bodies are cut up, distributes the various pieces, and observes the feast that follows with the greatest composure, without in the least urging anyone else to follow his example. At various times I have asked him as well as his people his reasons for this exceptional behavior, and the sole reason for his dislike of human meat was always: "He does not like it," his people said; "It does not taste good," he said.

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Scarification

Everywhere in the region in question there prevails the custom of scarification of certain parts of the body, whereby certain patterns are produced. On the almost black skin of the Solomon Islanders a tattoo would leave no traces; scarification, however, leaves visible marks and replaces tattooing there. I have the impression that this skin decoration is practiced more frequently in the north than in the south, but even in the north it is not general, and you see a great many individuals without any skin markings.

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Scarification of the skin is executed by men as well as women--the latter, however, seem to have the greatest artistic proficiency; both treat boys as well as girls. The process takes place somewhere between the 7th and the 11th year. For scratching the skin they use a sharpened shell (kappi in Buka). First the face is scarified (A. B. Meyer and R. Parkinson, Album von Papuatypen, Plates 26 and 27); the pattern consists of certain parallel zigzag lines arranged according to a set system. The facial scarification is called

[852]

On north Bougainville I repeatedly observed a multi-pronged arrow; 226
the points attached to the arrowshaft, which were arranged after the 227
fashion of the well-known fishing spears, consisted of 4 to 6 very sharp and pointed bamboo splinters. The owners of these arrows were inhabitants of the interior; I assume that the arrow is used principally in the rivers and water courses in the interior since I never observed it among the coastal inhabitants.

North Bougainville and Buka have one fishing method that is not [171]
found in the south: namely, fishing by means of artificial weir baskets. These weir baskets (in Buka: fwou) are made from the leaf ribs of the coconut palm; they are 1 to 1 1/2 meters high and conical in shape; the lower circular opening measures up to [35] one meter in diameter. The leaf ribs lie close together and are firmly attached at intervals of 5 to 10 centimeters; only the upper ends have no connection for a length of 15 to 25 centimeters. When using it, one inserts into the upper end a little ring of tough wood (in Buka: fapirik). This ring is fastened to a straight stick about 25 to 30 centimeters long by means of four thinner rods which run from its edge to the middle. The ring is used to make the weir basket taut; the projecting ends at the top of the basket are attached to the central rod by means of a string, and this keeps the entire implement taut. This weir basket is often used in shallow water; the fisherman holds the upper and pointed end in his hand and drops the open lower end over the fish to be caught.

In the narrow drains of the mangrove swamps the fish are caught by means of fish dams; these are made in the following way: between and on sticks which, at a distance of about 1 meter from each other, are stuck in the ground diagonally across the course of the water, a wicker work of coconut leaves is fastened, so that when the water level falls the fish are blocked off from the sea.

It goes without saying that all the fish caught in the sea are also 262 ●
used as food. Sea cucumbers, cuttlefish, snails and mollusks of every description find their way into the cooking pot. The native [825]
can exactly distinguish the poisonous fish--and their number is not slight--from the unharmful ones. Sharks and dolphins are considered delicacies, but there is no special catching apparatus for them; spear and arrow are the main weapons used. As a rule they sneak up on 225
tortoises on the small islands and sandbanks when the animals visit them to lay their eggs; many a tortoise who is resting on the surface of the sea is also killed by spear.

3: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1932
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vain for more *bari*, they were angry with the people, they said: "There is no fish here, we have looked in vain for fish, there is no fish." They all went back to their own village. 539

They prepared a return feast, they killed one 'possum. They sent a message to the other village, they should all come and eat the return feast. They all went, they ate, they looked in vain for *kokoin* (pudding made of pounded taro and coconut oil) and 'possums, they were angry, they said: "Where is the food?" They (the other people) said: "We are returning the feast you gave. You did not give us plenty to eat, we are returning it. We have made a feast with one 'possum, that's all, it's quite enough for you." [262]

CLASS V. ANIMAL STORIES.

These comprise a type of story common to the folk-tales of all peoples, in which animals, birds and fishes are represented as talking and behaving like human beings, as happens in so many of our own fairy stories. They differ from fables in that they are not supposed to point a moral. Many of them explain the origin of the peculiarities of certain beasts, are, in fact, "Just-so Stories". 538

The Iguana and the Bush-fowl.

Two friends, a bush-fowl (Kolong) and an iguana (Bas) thought they would like to make a feast, when the almonds were ripe. They went to the bush. Bas said: "Kolong, let us get some almonds." Kolong said: "All right, let's go now." So they found an almond tree, and Bas said: "You go up first." So Kolong went up the tree. He came back and said: "I can't go up, I am not heavy enough." So Bas went up and threw down almonds, till Kolong said there were enough. Then they went home, and got their stone pestle and wooden tray (on which the nuts are pounded). Kolong said to Bas: "You peel some taro while I pound the almonds." So they did, and made *kokoin* 539